



*Headquarters of the
Northwest Virginia Regional Drug/Gang Task Force
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May 8, 2014

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
110 N. Cameron St.
Winchester, VA 22601

Re: Heroin Epidemic

Dear Congressman Wolf:

On behalf of the members of the Northwest Virginia Regional Drug Task Force Command Board, I want to express our appreciation to you for the time that you so graciously spent with us on Monday, April 14, 2014.

We have, it seems, turned to you time after time for assistance during our most difficult hours, and this is one of those times. It is no secret that our region is in the midst of a heroin crisis. Perhaps Task Force Coordinator Jay Perry has described it best: "People are dying."

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, statistics related to overdose injuries and deaths continue to remain grim.

In the four-month span of 2014, heroin overdoses have claimed the lives of twelve men and women and injured twenty-one others. Board Members take very seriously the responsibility of suppressing this crisis. Since last August, the Task Force has sponsored three heroin stakeholders' meetings in an attempt to quell the epidemic. And while the response of stakeholders has been admirable, without a doubt, the sheer number of investigations related to heroin deaths and injuries have placed an unprecedented strain upon our collective resources, and just as importantly, our Task Force Officers.

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This purpose of this letter is to respectfully ask for your assistance with two Virginia legislative issues, which we believe are crucial to law enforcement's ability to successfully repress the current heroin epidemic.

We are asking for your help to encourage state legislators to adopt a proposed piece of legislation that would require hospitals to report overdose incidents to law enforcement. The adoption of the law would greatly assist the Task Force with documenting the overdose incidents and would enhance our ability to identify and prosecute those who are distributing the heroin throughout the region.

Secondly, the Task Force is proposing an amendment to the current Virginia Law that would eliminate the restriction which requires defendants **must be present at the time of the overdose** before he/she can be charged with an offense related to an injury or death. Additionally, we are requesting the amended law be made a part of the Virginia Murder statute.

The Task Force Command Board would be greatly appreciative of any assistance you may provide in achieving our proposed amendment, as well as the new legislation.

If there are questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim', is positioned above the typed name of the sender.

Sheriff Timothy Carter
Chairman/NWVARDGTF

tcc:dcb